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Crop and Weather Information for the Month of January 2002

WESTERN

Clallam/Jefferson: On January 7, a state of emergency was declared by Clallam County, following the highest ever recorded flows along the Dungeness River. The Dungeness River peaked at 8,000 cubic feet per second. County officials expected damage to salmon spawning grounds in area rivers. There were no reports of damage to agricultural land due to flooding. Both counties received significant amount of snow during late January storms.

Grays Harbor: Most ag activities were severely limited due to persistent rainfall. Many fields had surface water accumulations, as soils were simply super saturated. Christmas tree growers took advantage of two days without rain to begin cleaning debris from harvested fields. Frigid temperatures, during the middle of the month, resulted in a light snow accumulation throughout the county. Livestock owners fed supplemental hay. Commercial gladiola growers continued cleaning and sorting corms inside heated sheds. Containerized ornamental nurserymen reported Chinese witch hazels in full bloom.

Pierce/S. King: There were no unusual situations to report at this time. The weather has been normal for this time of year.

Conditions look favorable for crops, for the coming year.

Thurston: Ag producers throughout Thurston County continued to be frustrated with an unusually wet month. In fact, the month was reported to be the eleventh wettest since 1948! The high rainfall resulted in moderate flooding of farmland adjacent to major rivers and streams, but no major economic losses were reported. Cold air in the middle of the month resulted in light snow accumulations. Livestock owners reported increased hay sales. Conifer seedling nurseries were behind schedule in lifting trees due to wet field conditions. Turfgrass growers resorted to using pumps to remove surface water accumulations the size of small lakes. Christmas tree growers reported silver spotted tiger moth infestations in some Douglas fir plantations. Organic truck gardeners continued planting vegetable seeds in greenhouses for later transplanting.

Snohomish/N. King: Heavy rain was received in most areas several days during the month. Winter conditions during the second half of the month, brought several inches of snow to the area. The snow from several winter storms lasted longer than normal for this area, due to the cold temperatures.

CENTRAL

Benton: A mild and open winter continued. No cold injury has been reported in any of the fruit crops. Pruning and other winter chores were progressing well.

Douglas/Chelan: More precipitation is needed. Wheat is currently vulnerable to frost damage because snow cover has disappeared in some parts of the county. Fruit trees were in good condition because no extremely cold weather has been experienced. The current apple crop in the warehouse is good quality, only smaller than originally estimated.

Grant: Winter wheat stands were generally good throughout

the dryland and irrigated regions. No significant damage has been detected so far on fall planted vegetable seed crops. With temperatures consistently above average, there has been concern about fruit trees breaking dormancy and insect problems.

Yakima: Average temperatures for January were mostly warmer, ranging from 6 degrees below normal to 17 degrees above normal, with .33 inch of precipitation. There were no suspected crop losses due to weather conditions.

EASTERN

Adams: Moisture accumulations have been slow with little precipitation. Soils were frozen and will limit water infiltration. Winter wheat was still small, but looks to be in fair condition moving into February. The wheat continued to be susceptible to winter kill because of small plants and no snow cover.

Adams (2nd Report): January featured few notable snow events in the early part of the month, but no lasting blanket for covering what was shaping up to be a better than average wheat crop. Colder temperatures in the last week led to some frost in the topsoil, but to date no runoff of any significance has occurred. Most CRP seeders were done for the season, a welcomed change from last winter.

Asotin: Winter precipitation has been about normal in some areas, while other areas had below normal precipitation. Most of January was very mild and many storms passed through the area. The storms provided more wind than moisture over much of the region. There was still moisture concerns due to the below normal precipitation and last year's drought. Winter wheat was in good condition with no winter damage so far. Wheat was smaller than normal in many area due to the lateness of the fall rains. Volunteer barley growing in the winter wheat was a concern due to the mild winter temperatures. Rangeland was in poor condition due to last year's drought. Producers may have to feed livestock longer this spring to allow the rangeland to recover.

Additional winter moisture is needed for recovery of the rangeland.

Lincoln: Limited precipitation was recorded last month in the county, and current frozen soil conditions will limit water infiltration. Winter wheat was smaller than normal but in fair condition. Small winter wheat in areas of the county without snow cover are susceptible to winter kill. Snow mold should not be a problem like last year.

Lincoln (2nd Report): The weather was normal for January in the county. Precipitation was adequate and temperatures were moderate for this time of the year. There were no reports of significant runoff or field washing.

Stevens: A significant thaw occurred mid-January. The end of January, cold temperatures were experienced without snow cover. Hay was in very tight supply with local prices sky rocketing to \$150 per ton.

Whitman: The average temperatures for January have been generally mild. Precipitation for most of the county has been good, with minimal surface runoff. Some beef herds have begun calving and hay supplies were reported as being adequate. The condition of winter wheat was considered good throughout most of the county.